

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated December 14, 2005, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. The application is believed to be in allowable condition.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the telephone interview of March 7, 2006. In that interview, the Examiner confirmed that claims 38-43, which were not specifically addressed in the Office Action dated December 14, 2005, stand objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but would be allowable if made to incorporate the limitations from the rejected base claims. Applicant addresses these claims below.

Claims 45-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 45 has been amended and is believed to be in allowable condition. Claims 46-54 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 45, and are patentable for at least the reasons that claim 45 is patentable, discussed below.

Claim 45 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,424,903 (Schreiber). Claim 45 is patentable over the cited reference.

Claim 45 is directed to a power distribution method. A power distribution method comprises energizing an input power line to power-up a group of power outlets on a power distribution system, and initializing the power distribution system according to at least one system parameter or at least one operating configuration. Initializing according to a system parameter or an operating configuration includes programming at least one of a normal-threshold value, an overload threshold value or an under-voltage threshold value into the power distribution system, programming delays into the power distribution system, the delays being related to powering-on and powering-off a power outlet in the group of power outlets, programming a sequence for which the power outlet from the group of power outlets is powered-on and powered-off with respect to a second power outlet from the group of power outlets, and controlling a relay to actuate to a conductive state in accordance with a predetermined sequence and a predetermined delay to power-on the power outlet in the group of power outlets on the power distribution system.

Schreiber discusses a power switching system for use in powering up the components of a personal computer or other electronic device. The user of the switching system uses a remote control to program the sequence in which power will be provided to particular components and

the delay between powering on the components. The processor stores the sequence and time delays according to which power is provided and actuates the relays in the same order. When the power switching system is powered down, the relays are actuated in the reverse order.

Schreiber does not teach or disclose a power distribution method that includes programming at least one of a normal-threshold value, an overload threshold value or an under-voltage threshold value into a power distribution system, all of which is recited in claim 45. Nor does Schreiber teach or disclose programming delays into a power distribution system, the delays being related to powering-on and powering-off a power outlet in the group of power outlets, and programming a sequence for which a power outlet from a group of power outlets is powered-on and powered-off with respect to a second power outlet from the group of power outlets, also recited in claim 45. For at least these reasons, claim 45 is patentable over Schreiber.

Claims 33-35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schreiber and US 5,825,100 (Kim). As discussed below claims 33-34 are patentable over the cited art, and claim 35 has been canceled.

Claim 33 is directed to a power strip. The power strip includes a housing having a first end and a second end, at least one power outlet mounted on an exterior surface of the housing, and a power management circuit on an interior region of the housing. The power management circuit includes a micro-controller coupled to the power supply and to a relay driver, the relay driver receiving control signals from the micro-controller, and an input power source sensor circuit is coupled intermediate the power supply and the micro-controller, to receive primary input power from the power supply and secondary input power from a secondary power source. The power management circuit also includes at least one relay coupled to the relay driver and to the at least one power outlet. The relay receives a control signal from the relay driver to actuate the relay to a conductive state to powering-on the power outlet and the relay receives another control signal from the relay driver to actuate the relay to a non-conductive state to powering-off the power outlet. The power strip is further comprised of an under voltage sensor coupled to the micro-controller and adapted to receive a predetermined voltage value from the power supply, and the micro-controller is configured to indicate that current from the power supply has exceeded a predetermined threshold value.

Schreiber discloses a power switching system for use in powering up the components of a personal computer or other electronic device. The user of the switching system uses a remote control to program the sequence in which power will be provided to particular components and the delay between powering on the components. The processor stores the sequence and time delays according to which power is provided and actuates the relays in the same order. When the power switching system is powered down, the relays are actuated in the reverse order.

Kim discloses an intelligent battery power system having an input power source sensor circuit.

Neither Schreiber nor Kim discloses or suggests, alone or in combination, a micro-controller configured to indicate that current from the power supply to the power strip has exceeded a predetermined threshold value, as recited in claim 33. For at least these reasons, claim 33 is patentable over Schreiber in view of Kim. Claims 34 and 35 depend, directly or indirectly from claim 33 and are patentable for at least the reasons discussed herein with respect to claim 33.

Claims 36-37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schreiber and Kim in view of United States Patent No. 6,211,581 (Farrant). Farrant discloses a power bar with remote control having multiple communication ports. However, Farrant fails to overcome the deficiencies of Schreiber and Kim as noted above with respect to claim 33. Claims 36-37 depend indirectly from claim 33 and are therefore patentable for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claim 33.

Claim 44 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schreiber and Kim in view of United States Patent No. 5,270,576 (Kahle). Kahle is directed to an electrical connector network having a current sensor circuit that is coupled to a power supply and to at least one outlet. However, Kahle fails to overcome the deficiencies of Schreiber and Kim discussed above with respect to claim 33, from which claim 44 directly depends. Thus, claim 44 is patentable for at least the reasons that claim 33 is patentable.

Claim 55 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 6,628,009 (Chapel) in view of Schreiber. Claim 56 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Chapel and Schreiber, in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,149,277 (LeMaster). Claim 57 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Chapel and

Schreiber in view of Kahle. Claims 55-57 have been canceled without prejudice, rendering rejection as to these claims moot.

Claim 45/46 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 11/10 of U.S. Patent No. 6,741,442. Claim 45 has been amended, and claim 46 has been canceled, rendering the double patenting rejection moot.

Applicants believe these claims are in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the enclosure submitted herewith, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney of record at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,



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